

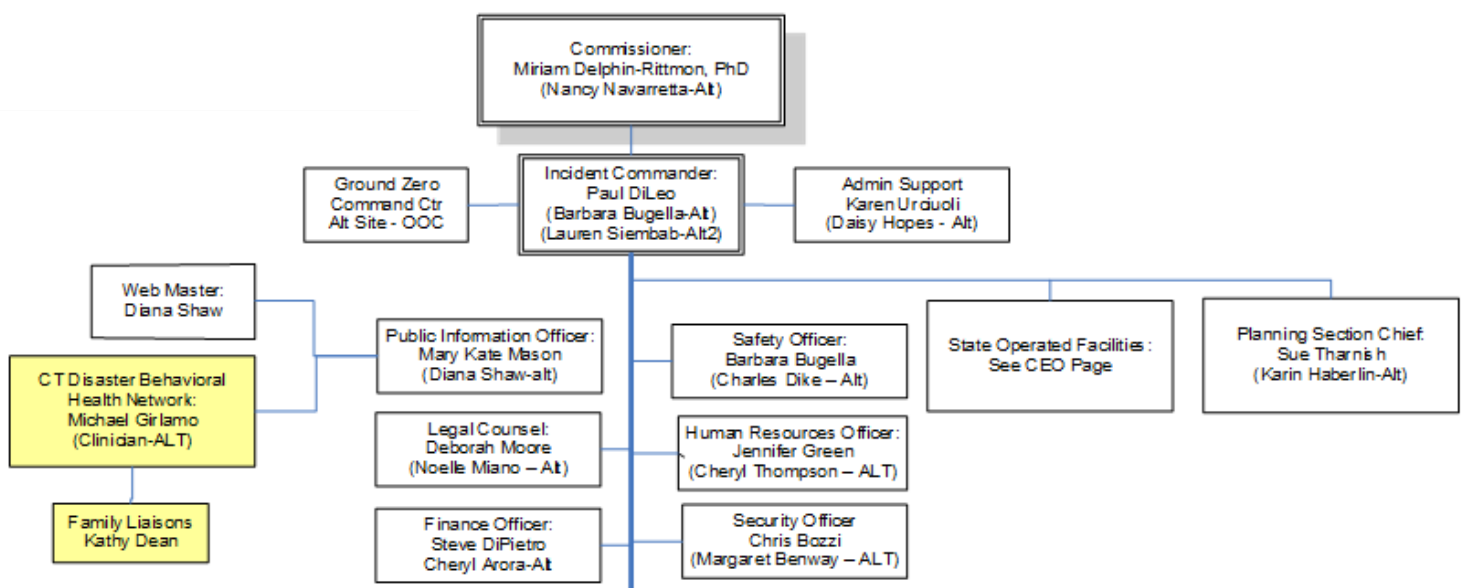
Message from Commissioner Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon:

I understand this is a stressful time for many. I am committed to supporting you, as well as the people we serve, during these challenging times. As you are aware, the State of Connecticut is closely monitoring the spread of COVID-19, or coronavirus disease 2019. I am in direct contact with the Governor's Office as well as the Department of Public Health regarding the impact of COVID-19 to our state. As a member of the Statewide incident command structure, including membership on the mass care subcommittee, I am receiving and sharing COVID-19 plans and details related to DMHAS.

Additionally, I have activated the agency's incident command structure. This structure is well-prepared to handle emergency situations and is coordinating all aspects of the DMHAS response. In addition to the Commissioner's Executive Group, facility CEOs are participating in regular conference calls as we respond to the outbreak.

I will share information on the virus and the DMHAS response as the situation evolves. Thank you for all you do for the people of our great state.

DMHAS Incident Command Team Structure



How COVID-19 Impacts DMHAS

In an effort to keep clients and staff as healthy and safe as possible, DMHAS has taken the following steps:

Social Distancing

As a large health care organization providing direct care to over 100,000 residents, working from home is not possible for many DMHAS employees. However, the Department is working with leadership to identify staff who are able to complete their daily job duties from home and determine whether or not it is possible for the employee to work from home. Individuals who are immunocompromised or with other serious medical conditions should inform their supervisor or human resources to determine if they are able to work from home or to identify ways in which they can continue to work safely. All decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the Department's business needs.

Screening of People Coming to DMHAS Facilities Including Staff and Visitors

Before entering DMHAS facilities, all individuals will be asked a series of questions to determine whether they may have been exposed to or are ill with COVID-19.

Restricting DMHAS Space for Public Use

Many DMHAS facilities serve as public meeting spaces within their communities. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, DMHAS facilities will not be available for public use until further notice. All meetings that are not DMHAS-related are to be cancelled and no public meetings should be scheduled.

No Out-of-State Travel

All out-of-state travel for March and April has been cancelled. No new or pending out-of-state travel requests will be approved until further notice.

Conference Calls

Meetings should be held via conference call whenever possible to encourage social distancing and prevent the unnecessary congregating of groups.

Child Care Needs

DMHAS is working with the Office of Early Childhood to identify child care needs for Level 1 (essential) staff. As schools around the state close, Level 1 staff should inform their supervisor of potential child care needs.

As the situation is fluid, we will be continuously reassessing to determine any additional steps that need to be taken. Please be sure to regularly check your email for memos and guidance as this evolves.

COVID-19 in Connecticut

There have been twelve confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Connecticut (eight in Fairfield County, three in Litchfield County, and one in Hartford County). As the disease progresses, it is likely that we will see additional cases of COVID-19 across our state.

In response to the presence of COVID-19 in Connecticut, the state has set up a website to keep residents informed. The website contains a wealth of information and will be updated regularly as the situation evolves and we learn more about the illness.

I encourage you all to visit the state's COVID-19 website regularly to stay informed. You can visit the website at <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>.

Helpful Resources:

While we are still learning about the virus, information is already available:

State of Connecticut COVID-19 Website

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

CDC COVID-19 Fact Sheet

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

World Health Organization

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Occupational Health and Safety Administration

www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/

**COVID
19**
CORONAVIRUS
DISEASE

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Patients with COVID-19 have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

*** Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure.**

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

www.cdc.gov/covid19-symptoms



Protecting Yourself and Others from COVID-19

COVID-19 mainly spreads from person-to-person between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and through droplets spread by an infected person when they cough or sneeze. Like other respiratory illnesses, there are steps you can take to protect yourself and others.

Protecting Yourself from Illness

Clean Your Hands Often



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid Close Contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Steps to Protect Others

- **Stay home if you're sick.** Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Wear a facemask if you are sick.** *If you are sick:* You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Learn what to do if you are sick.

If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

- **Clean and disinfect.** Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.